

THE INFORMER

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DIABETES

DDK FELLOWS NEWSLETTER
AND DIGESTIVE AND KIDNEY DISEASES

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Travel Award Winners	1
Research!America	1-2
Call for Writers	2
Events/Announcements	3
Retreat Review	4
PhD Comics	4
Review in Pictures	5-7

The Fellows Advisory Board (FAB) in collaboration with the NIDDK Fellowship Office has started a monthly newsletter to announce events and news. If you would like to help write articles for the newsletter or have any questions or comments regarding the newsletter or FAB, please contact:

Editor-in-Chief:
Lystranne Maynard
maynardl@mail.nih.gov

Photography and Layout
Editor:
Nicholas Noinaj
noinajn@niddk.nih.gov

2010 Travel Award Winners



Congratulations to all the winners! (from left to right): **Leelama Jacob, Michelle Mondoux, Yan Wang, Rossio Kersey, Cajetan Dogo-Isonagie**

Research!America - From Congress to Your Mom: Communicating with Non-Scientific Audiences

by Chaya Pooput

At the National Postdoctoral Association meeting in Philadelphia in early March, I attended a workshop that I found very interesting and inspiring, which was called "*From Congress to Your Mom: Communicating with Non-Scientific Audiences*". The session was presented by a panel from Research!America: Dr. Stacie Propst, Vice President of Policy and Outreach, Emily Connelly, Director of Science Policy and Outreach, and Heather Benson, Manager of

Science Outreach. Research!America is a non profit organization whose mission is to make research to improve health a higher national priority.

The first part of the workshop focused on improving our public communication skills. The problem right now is that there are a lot of science issues in the news, but the scientific community is often silent. To avoid public misinformation, the scientists need to learn how to convey the value of



science such that anyone can relate and understand. Typically, we scientists only communicate amongst ourselves and often fail to engage critical stakeholders (the general public, the policy makers and the media) to our cause.

The presenters gave a lot of useful tips for better communicating with the general public, such as

(continued on page 2).



Non-Scientific Audiences, continued from page 1

aiming for a 10th grade reading level (about 15 years old), not using conditionals (would, should, could, might, etc) as the public needs firm statements, and not using too complex words or too much scientific jargon.

Heather Benson suggested 5 steps to follow for effective communication: (1) place the hook, (2) announce the problem, (3) suggest the solution, (4) explain what happens when it works, and (5) do something about it. To illustrate this, she presented an easy example: the hook would be osteoporosis which is a disease that can affect many women. The problem is that this disease can cause a prominence in bone fracture. One of the main causes of osteoporosis is a deficiency in vitamin K, and a solution can be that Brussels sprouts contain a lot of vitamin K. By eating more food containing vitamin K, women can have stronger bones, so what should we do? Eat more Brussels sprouts!

The second part of the workshop focused on how to use our newly learned communication skills for advocacy. Stacie Propst

pointed out that advocacy and lobbying are two different things: to advocate simply means to speak up, to plead a case of another or to champion a cause. Lobbying, in general, consists of communications intended to influence legislation. In the present economic situation where all the public expenses are scrutinized, scientists are totally invisible in the political or public arena. This is a crucial time to make the public and the lawmakers understand that funding scientific research is not futile, but will allow a smarter healthcare and creation of jobs and business of the future. We need to engage elected officials or act locally by volunteering to be a science advisor or participating in grassroots efforts. For that, Research!America has created "*New Voices for Research*" which aims to empower young professionals to transform their passion for research into advocacy through a public blog (<http://newvoicesforresearch.blogspot.com>) and a private online community. Research!America is

developing "New Voices" to be articulate spokespersons working to make science and research higher national priorities. Another interesting initiative from Research!America is "*Your Congress, Your Health*" (http://www.researchamerica.org/your_congress): since 2007, every member of Congress has been invited to complete a questionnaire to help inform their constituents about where they stand on health, research, and other important issues. Of the current Congress, 190 members are on record through these initiatives and 849 members and candidates have participated.

This is an exciting time for science because the current government understands the importance of scientific research, but we must take responsibility to talk about the value of our work. So let's raise our voice and make advocacy part of our life!

For more information about Research!America and its science policy internship, please visit: <http://www.researchamerica.org>



A Call for Writers by Lystranne Maynard

We have debuted two new features in the newsletter: *Reading Nook* and *Tech Corner*. If anyone has additional features or article ideas for the newsletter, please send us an email. If the writing bug bites you unexpectedly and you find yourself pounding out a story with nowhere to send it, the Informer is always ready to accept your stories. After such a fun and successful retreat, we hope that more fellows are excited to share their experiences at the NIH and NIDDK with other fellows. Please contact either Nick Noinaj (noinaj@niddk.nih.gov) or myself if you would like to volunteer your time and/or musings.

Your Editor-in-Chief, Lystranne Maynard (maynardl@mail.nih.gov)

OITE - NIH Career Symposium

Registration is now open for the 2010 NIH Career Symposium on May 18th (8:00 am to 4:30 pm) at Natcher Conference Center, Bldg 45.

Registration: <http://tinyurl.com/OITE-2010-05-18>. Please register by May 12th.

Keynote: Kathie L. Olsen, PhD, Vice President, International Programs, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities. Dr. Olsen has a terrific career, with various posts in academics, government and non-profits. She was previously the head of NSF and the chief scientific officer at NASA. She is an inspirational speaker that will energize you as you begin your career path.

Panel Sessions, and new this year, Skill Blitzes!

Whether you are a new graduate student, a postdoc, or clinical fellow just beginning to consider career options or a senior student/fellow ready to look for a job, the NIH Career Symposium is for you!



FelCom Special Documentary Screening: *Naturally Obsessed: the Making of a Scientist*

In partnership with OITE, FelCom is excited to present the documentary "**Naturally Obsessed: the Making of a Scientist**". Shot over 3 years in a molecular biology lab, this one hour film shows the life and the emotional ups and downs of graduate students and their assistant professor, who is up for tenure. This quite funny and very realistic documentary will certainly revive some of your memories in PhD and generate interesting discussions with your friends. For more information about the film, please check the website: <http://www.naturallyobsessed.com/>

We've decided not to screen at the usual auditorium but at our favorite bar, BlackFinn, so everybody can enjoy the film in a relaxed atmosphere with refreshing beverages!

What: Screening of the documentary *Naturally Obsessed: the Making of a Scientist*

Where: BlackFinn (4901 Fairmont Ave., Bethesda)

When: Wednesday May 26, 6-10 PM (the film will start at 7 PM)

The event is free and open to everybody so invite your friends, co-workers and family! For more information about the event please contact Chaya (pooputc@niddk.nih.gov)



Fun! Fun! Fun! Enroll in the Buddy System

The NIDDK Fellowship Office is still looking for Buddy Volunteers to help orient New Foreign Fellows from their own country. If you are interested, please contact Lorraine Moore at: lorrainem@intra.niddk.nih.gov.

Upcoming Social Events:

May 16: Bike Ride to Alexandria

May 18: NIH Career Symposium Social Networking at BlackFinn 5-10 PM

May 22: National Asian Heritage Festival

May 26: Screening of "Naturally Obsessed" at BlackFinn 6-10 PM

For more information about social events contact Chaya Pooput:

pooputc@niddk.nih.gov

**NIDDK Office of Fellow
Recruitment and Career
Development office**

Bldg 12A, Rm. 3011.
301-451-3640 (voice)
301-402-7461 (fax)

fellowships@intra.niddk.nih.gov
(e-mail)

fellowshipoffice.niddk.nih.gov

Staff Members:

Louis Simchowitz, M.D., M.B.A.
Director

Kala Viswanathan
Program Specialist

Lorraine Moore
Program Assistant

We're on the Web!**NIDDK Informer
Newsletter:**

[http://fellowshipoffice.niddk
.nih.gov/newsletter](http://fellowshipoffice.niddk.nih.gov/newsletter)

REVIEW: 2010 NIDDK Fellows Retreat

Lystranne Maynard



From all accounts, the 2010 NIDDK Fellows Retreat was a resounding success! We have heard many positive comments and reviews from several attendees, and we hope that we can keep improving each year to make it a better experience for all.

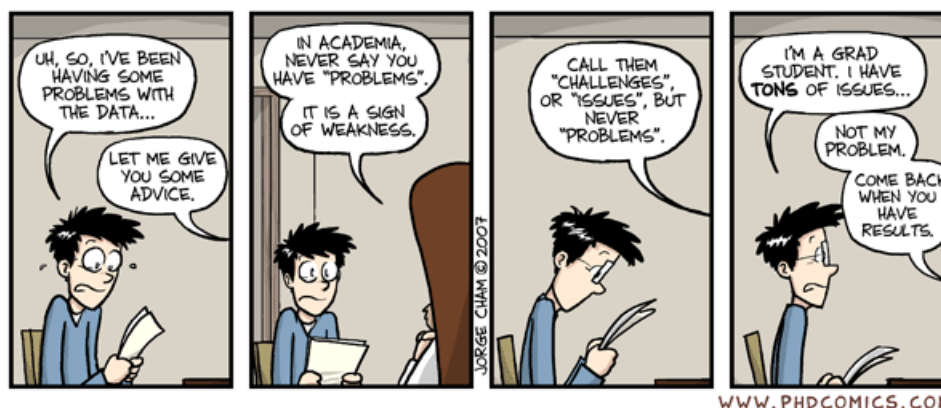
Many fellows thought the retreat was a great way to meet other people, and to learn what other fellows are doing in NIDDK. The hotel and facilities got rave reviews, and the food got very high scores as well. More importantly, some surveyed believed that the retreat made the fellows feel like valuable members of NIDDK.

We did get many suggestions to improve the registration and submission process such as improving browser and computer compatibility, and allowing abstract submission off-campus. We were also urged to be "green" and economical, so future survey forms will be sure to be double sided.

An overwhelming majority of fellows liked the length of the retreat and the Travel Awards given for best presentations. In short, many agreed that the retreat represented a good mix of science, networking, career development and fun!

Please enjoy our photomontage of the 2010 NIDDK Fellows Retreat on the following pages.

PhD Comics



2010 NIDDK Fellows Retreat: A Review in Pictures

By Nick Noinaj and Chaya Pooput





Poster Sessions





Social/ Activities

